



# THE NATIONAL PREACHER.

Third Series.]

APRIL, 1863.

Vol. II.—No. 4.

## SERMON V.

BY REV. THOMAS H. STOCKTON.\*

CHAPLAIN OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, IN CONGRESS, WASHINGTON, D. C.

### THE CORONATION OF LOVE IN THE SOUL.

"AND now abideth faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love."—1 Cor. 13: 13.

THE CORONATION OF LOVE! What a glorious subject! May the spirit of glory and of God rest upon us! Amen. And let all the people say, Amen—yea, let all the people say, Amen.

We have reason to pray thus—all of us reason to pray thus—and to pray with all humility and all fervor, for without the Spirit we are nothing, and can do nothing, and can become nothing. It is delightful to think, and delightful to feel, and delightful to speak, and delightful to hear, when the thoughts are God's, and the sympathies are God's, and the words are God's; but the things of God must come from God, and it is the plan of God to reveal "them unto us by his Spirit, for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God."

\* Delivered in the Capitol, Sunday, May 4th, 1862.—One of a Series.

The coronation of love! Not the destruction of faith. Not the destruction of hope. Not the suspension or impairment of either. And yet, how often is it said, that faith and hope may accompany love to the very gate of heaven, but can not enter there. How often is it sung:

"The atonement of Thy blood apply,  
'Till faith to sight improve,  
'Till hope in full fruition die,  
And all my soul be love."

Where did this notion of the fugitive nature of faith and hope originate, and what is its sanction? Is this one of the thoughts of God, and is it any where honored with the authority of God? If so, let it so be shown. Meantime, it may at least be affirmed, that the noble chapter before us gives it no encouragement. Though sanctified to the great purpose of celebrating the excellence of love, it does not carry its comparisons so far as to make this grace the immortal survivor of its associates. It teaches, indeed, as we have seen, that miraculous gifts and ecclesiastical offices shall pass away. It teaches, moreover, that all the infirmities among Christians, occasioned by these temporal distinctions, shall come to an end; that every element of envy, and pride, and vanity, and rudeness, and selfishness, and resentment, and suspicion, and guile, shall perish. It teaches, also, that prophecies shall fail, and tongues cease, and knowledge vanish away. But it does not teach that faith or hope, shall die. Instead of this, it explicitly, emphatically, and most impressively declares, in the text now before us—this last verse summing up the force of the whole chapter—"And now *abideth* faith, hope, love, these three: but the greatest of these is love."

I am aware that the passage is sometimes read with this emphasis: "And *now* abideth faith, hope, love;" that is, as it is inferred, "these three" graces abide together in the Church on earth; "but, the greatest of these is love," because, as the construction proceeds, faith and hope are confined to the Church on earth, whereas love shall ascend to the eternal felicities of the Church in heaven. But love does not need such a poor apology as this for the illustration of its superiority. Its greatness is not like that of an Oriental despot, requiring the sacrifice of kindred for the maintenance of its own supremacy. No, no. The nearest to its throne are the most loyal to its scepter, and their existence is as precious as its own.

Let us cheer ourselves, therefore, with a better reading. Hark! "Abideth;" that is, in contrast to all the fugitive phenomena noticed in the preceding verses of the chapter. "And now abideth;" that is, and now, in conclusion of what has been said about fleeting things, I have the pleasure of assuring you of some things

that are stable—some things which are essential to the Church, and which, therefore, will continue to abide in it, irrespective of circumstances, whether on earth or in heaven, in time or in eternity. “And now abideth faith, hope, love”—of one of which I have already told you that it “never faileth,” and the other two of which I now connect with it, as being alike permanent in their nature. “And now abideth faith, hope, love—these three.” See; neither less nor more than “these three.” Remember the distinctive, inseparable, and interminable union of “these three.” “And now abideth faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love;” that is, the greatest, not in duration, but in nature and influence; the highest, happiest, and mightiest of principles; the sovereign power of the sinless and deathless universe.

I am the more pleased with this understanding of the text, because there is a clear and rich philosophy in it, as well as an apparently Divine authority.

Our spiritual constitution has three distinctions—intellectual, sentimental, and emotional. We expect these distinctions to be perpetuated in the world to come. An emotional existence alone would be a blind existence. An emotional and sentimental existence, without intellect, would be only like adding a dream to a sense—a phantasmagoric consciousness. An emotional and intellectual existence, without sentiment, would lack a sympathetic connection; their transitions would resemble a change from day to night, or from night to day, without the intervening softness and beauty of the morning and evening twilight. The ideal of our nature demands the union of the three elements—reason, imagination, and affection; or, as previously stated, the powers of intellect, sentiment, and emotion.

What, then, can be so consistent or agreeable as the anticipation of the continued cultivation of faith, hope, and love? These are the proper correspondents of the constitutional distinctions I have named. Faith is the glory of intellect, hope is the glory of sentiment, and love is the glory of emotion. Faith fills the reason with truth, hope fills the imagination with beauty, and love fills the affections with joy.

It is easy to invent interesting trinities; and perhaps there is some danger of delusion in such exercises. But this is one that occurs by inspiration, agrees with philosophy, and seems only to ask attention to make it equally pleasing and useful.

It is somewhat like the Trinity in the Divine nature. This is personally expressed by the terms, Father, Son, and Spirit. Again, it seems to be impersonally designated by the words, Love, Wisdom, and Power. Something like a transition, also, is intimated between the first and second of these, by means of the third. The Spirit proceeds from the Father to the Son; Power comes forth from Love, in aid of Wisdom.

And is there not something of a similar character in all the range of nature? Do we not every where see, instead of an abrupt, immediate exchange of extremes, a gentle, mediatorial transition? Why is the earth covered with verdure, but because of the crumbled mold between the rocks below and the growth above? And does not the softness of spring interpose between the last frosts of winter and the first fires of summer? And again, does not the blue haze of the autumn intervene between the last fires of summer and the first frosts of winter? Look even at a single fruit-tree. Is there not first the form, then the beauty, and then the use? There stands an apple-tree, for instance—a dark, gaunt form, stripped by the winter, leafless and unsightly. Will it all at once, suddenly, fill its branches with fruit, and so accomplish its ultimate purpose, without the mediation of beauty? Not at all. Even its bark will gather somewhat of renewed greenness, and the delicate leaves will unwrap themselves from their foldings, and the more delicate blossoms cover it all over with their damask hues, sweetening the sunny air, and attracting the humming-birds and honey-bees to its boughs, now desolate, before the first bulb of the future ripeness shall make its appearance.

And what now? Is not man correspondent with nature? Nay, is not man the image of God? If, then, there be a form, a bloom, and a use in nature; a love, a wisdom, and a power in God; a sort of divine system of transition by mediation; shall the immortality of man be reduced to the single attribute, the absolute simplicity of emotion? Surely not. His spirit shall retain for ever its three great distinctions—intellect, sentiment, and emotion; or, reason, imagination, and affection; or, truth, beauty, and joy; or, in the language of the text, “faith, hope, and love.” The perfection of each will be found in the union of all. Faith will not be cold, nor hope delusive, nor love blind. Truth will illuminate joy, and joy will animate truth, by the undeceptive vision of undecaying beauty.

Even nature requires of man faith in the unchangeable, hope in the improvable, and love for the useful. In like manner, God requires of man, faith in his wisdom, hope in his power, and the return of love for love. Even the progress of personal and social existence makes the same requirement—faith in the past, hope for the future, and love for the present.

In a word, “these three” seem to be constitutional distinctions, and there is no warrant in the chapter, or any where else, for the supposition of any essential change in our constitution. Gifts, offices, infirmities, prophecies, tongues, knowledge—any thing and every thing that is merely conditional may pass away, but nothing that is constitutional. The thoughts, and imaginings, and utterances of childhood, as we have seen, may be put away, but not the powers which produce them. The powers of the man are the

same as those of the child, only developed, enlarged, and improved. And so, spiritually at least, the powers of the saint in heaven, are the same as those of the man on earth—only, in like manner, still farther developed, enlarged, and improved. Faith, at last, is free from doubt, and hope from fear, and love from grief.

Such of my hearers as are familiar with the history of Intellectual Philosophy, need no new information to assure them of the fact, that, after all its proud, and often infidel, and sometimes blasphemous speculations, it has been forced, by the utter exhaustion of every thing else, to take off its sandals and venture upon the holy ground of religion, and seek refuge in the law of faith, or belief. Even the theory of knowledge first and belief afterward, has been made to yield to the theory of belief first and knowledge afterward. We must believe in order to know, is now the approved doctrine; and the meaning is, we must confide in the fidelity of our organs for the acquisition of knowledge, before we can be satisfied that we really and truly know any thing. "All things have their root in belief," said Luther, three centuries ago, speaking as much in the spirit of a philosopher as of a theologian. And now, even the Transcendentalists of Germany, as well as the Common-Sense school of Scotland, and the Eclectics of all nations, seem disposed to unite in the same acknowledgment. This confidence in our own faculties, it would appear, must be as necessary to us in heaven as on earth. We are bound to suppose, indeed, that there, this kind of faith, as well as our faith in God and nature, instead of being lost, will be perfected and confirmed forever.

As to hope, unless the very notion of a future perish, it must be hopefully contemplated; for, to the inhabitants of heaven, at least, there will be nothing to fear.

As to love, there is no doubt about that; so that, altogether, I trust it will not be regarded as taken for granted, if I now conclude that we may rely upon the text as meaning: "And now," in review of all, I announce that "faith, hope, and love, these three," "abide" together, essential principles of our redeemed and sanctified nature, forever and ever; but still, whether on earth or in heaven, in time or in eternity, at the Cross below or at the Throne above, "the greatest of these is love."

What, then, remains? If faith, and hope, and love, are alike immortal, qualifying us, by their interchanging modifications of consciousness, for self-communion, and natural communion, and social communion, and divine communion, we have only to ask, Of "these three," which is "the greatest?"

This is no idle or invidious inquiry. It is not like the ancient question, "Who shall be greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" It is rather, "What is greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" It is not like many a modern asking, Who shall be greatest in the Church? or, Who shall be greatest in the State? It is more like

the perpetual solicitude of the awakened sinner, or the imperfect believer, What shall I do to be saved? What is of first and chief importance to the recovery of the perfection of my nature? What is my highest nature, that my best attention may be given to its utmost improvement?

I answer: It is plain that our spiritual nature is higher than our material nature. In like manner, confining our view to our spiritual constitution alone, it is equally plain that our mental nature is higher than our sentimental nature, and that our moral nature is higher than our mental nature. Now, love is the highest law of our moral nature, and, of course, the proper controlling principle of our whole nature.

As it is with God, so it is with man—since man was made in the likeness of God. How, then, is it with God? Which is the highest nature of God? Not power, not wisdom, but love. Therefore, it is never said, God is power, or God is wisdom; but it is said, "God is love." So great is the excellency of love, even in the infinite nature of the Deity, that it is no wrong to his other perfections to make it expressive of his whole being. And so with man. It could not be said with propriety, Man is faith, or man is hope; but it might be said with all propriety, Man is love. "For love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God." "God is love; and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him." Surely, therefore, what is true of God himself, may be certainly affirmed of the child of God.

Again: There is a sense in which there may be faith without love, and hope without love. Devils may believe, and sinners may hope, without a single thrill of love. But the presence of love is proof of faith and hope also; proof of a purer faith and a surer hope. In a word, love is the life of the whole nature; and the higher it rises, the more the entire man ascends with it toward all that is holy, and blissful, and sublime.

What, then, is wanting but the CORONATION OF LOVE—a triple coronation—a coronation in the Soul, a coronation in the Church, a coronation in Heaven.

Are you surprised at this division? Does it prevent a desirable unity, and threaten a failure of effect? I can not help it. I speak not as a Grecian artist. I would rather speak as a Galilean fisherman. The honey may have been sweet on the lips of Plato, but what was that to the fire on the lips of Isaiah? The civic crown of Demosthenes may have been a fitting symbol of the glorious eloquence which won it; but what was that cold gold in comparison with the living glory on the brow of Saint Peter? and what was that impassioned and splendid oration, when compared with the lightning and thunder of the Holy Ghost, flashing from the eyes and pealing in the voice of the inspired Apostle, and glitter-



ing in the minds and reverberating in the consciences of thousands of the murderers of Jesus, trembling with their guilt, and crying in their dread, "Men and brethren, what shall we do to be saved?" Oh! give me rather one inspiration of the power that saves, than all the pomp of speech that ministers merely to personal renown.

Alas! that the silver trumpet should be soiled with streaming tears, before it sounds its summons to the pageant of the occasion. And yet, who can remember, without weeping? The soul—the godlike soul. To speak of it only since the advent of Christ, who can remember its history without being ready to weep even tears of blood?

Think for a moment of the soul of Jesus. Was not that the paragon for all the souls of after time? And what was it that wore the crown in the soul of Jesus? Was it not love? I will not extend the metaphor into an allegory. I will not expand the soul into a palace; transform its faculties into persons; and its silent ascendancy of love into the tumult of a royal exhibition. There is no true sympathy in such formal perversions. I wish to be personal; to cleave to the soul itself; and appeal for an interest in its quickest and deepest energies.

What then? Having touched the passing trope, in relation to the spirit of the Lord Jesus, I now ask: What has been the history of the individual man, since the advent of our Redeemer? What has been this history within the range of Christendom? What was it, before the dark ages? What was it, through the dark ages? What has it been, ever since the dark ages? What is its current history? I can not say much of the lowly man—the man of the masses. In most ages, there is great obscurity in this relation. Where we can not see clearly, it is at least most pleasant to indulge favorable suppositions. But, the man of mark, whatever his sphere, the man who holds a place in the annals of time, what has worn the crown in his soul, since the example of Jesus was set before him?

Alas! this abstraction is almost as unsympathetic as an allegory. I mean the public men of the past, whether in church or state. I mean all men of the present, public and private; for we are able to form some judgment of these. I mean, in particular, ourselves. What has worn the crown in their souls? What now wears it in our souls? Has it been love? Is it love? Pure, holy, heavenly love? Divine love? The love that burns for the glory of God? The love that delights in doing good to mankind?

I tell you why I am ready to weep. I am an admirer of great men. I can not help it. True, I do not idolize them; God forbid. I would not dishonor Christianity, by apologizing for their vices. God forbid, may be again said, most reverently. I would not submit my own judgment, or conscience, or conduct, or rights, or liberties of any kind, to the greatest of them. But still, a truly great

man, however little he may be to his Creator, is the most splendid of all creations to us.

I look, then, over the history of the great men whom God has sent into the world, since his own perfect Son showed us all how to live. I see them, in many instances, so great that they seem to overshadow the Lord Jesus himself. Nay; do not be startled. I am bound to speak honestly and earnestly. I say, therefore, again, that, sometimes, to my own mind, these great men appear to be so great as almost to overshadow the Lord Jesus himself. They are great in genius—all kinds of genius; artistic, scientific, philosophic, poetic, oratoric, civil, military—every sort that can be named. They are equally great in all kinds of learning. They are equally great in noble and successful enterprises. They secure the control of their cotemporaries, and are certain of the applause of posterity. Fame, and wealth, and pleasure, and power, absolutely kneel down and worship them. The arts multiply their images, until, it may be, they even outnumber the gods of heathenism; and Christian nations, grown familiar with their lives, seem insensible to their crimes, and only responsive to the celebration of their praise.

Now, when I turn to the contemplation of the Lord Jesus, I do not witness the same displays of genius and learning, to say the least; nor the same kind of popular or national enthusiasm in his favor, in his own day, or even in the present.

But now I ask myself the question, How did these men live? Did they live like Jesus? Can their lives be summed up in the words—"They went about doing good?" Was it holy love that wore the crown in their souls? And instantly my spirit kindles with indignation, and then melts into grief. No; it was not love that wore the crown. Oh! if love had reigned, what good they might have wrought. But it was not love. Nor yet was it even what at first it might appear to be. It was not, for instance, genius, or learning, or sensual lust, after all. It was self, the anti-christ of self; and genius, and learning, and lust, and avarice, and wealth, and office, and rank, and fame, and power, and pleasure, and opportunity, and temptation, and every thing within their command, was made to bow down and minister to the idolatry of self.

With all? Has it been so with all? No, not with all. Thank God, there have been many and noble exceptions. I need not name them. Their example adorns the earth, and is not forgotten in heaven. But it should not have been so with any. The law of Christianity runs thus: "For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself. For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord; whether we live therefore or die we are the Lord's." In relation to true Christians, this is so by voluntary devotion; and in the sense of responsibility



it is so, even in relation to merely nominal Christians. No man, however lofty and illustrious, has any right, under Christianity, to live to himself. He is bound to live in love to God and man. He is bound to live and die in the grateful service of our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, it is again said, that Christ "died for all, that they which live"—that is, live because he died for them—"should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again." Even if Christ were still dead, there would be reason, supposing the other facts true, to revere his memory, and respect his precepts, but he lives and reigns, and commands homage, and the highest among men is as much bound, or even more bound, than the lowest, to render it. Who, then, can think of the ingratitude and selfishness of the great without weeping?

But, if I admire great men, more emphatically I love all mankind—the middle classes, the lower classes, all classes; the poorest of the poor, and the vilest of the vile. Who, then, with such feelings can recall the history of these as far as it may be recalled, or observe their condition, at the present time, without grieving for their want of love? How can we identify ourselves with them without sorrowing that we have so little of this divine principle in our souls?

Within this range, there is no great genius, no great learning, no great fame, or wealth, or power; no great national enterprise, or influence, or enthusiasm. There is general respectability, intelligence, refinement, competence, independence, comfort, external morality, patriotism, and impulsive philanthropy; with an undergrowth of occasional virulent poverty, and ignorance, and passion, and vice, and crime, and woe.

Ah me! why is it that love has been dishonored here? These are the classes with which Jesus identified himself. He was content, so to speak, that the great men of the world should seem to eclipse him, that he might appear more fully as a man of the people, and inspire them, if practicable, with his own spirit.

He "took upon himself the form of a servant" that he might show his love, and persuade men to imitate his example. It was not genius, or learning, or fame, or wealth, or power, that men needed, but love. If genius had been needed, what infinite genius he might have displayed. If learning had been needed, what infinite erudition he might have disclosed. If fame had been needed, how gladly the trumpets of angels would have challenged the applause of the world in his behalf. If wealth had been needed, how quickly the treasures of the universe would have been open to meet his demands. And, if power had been needed, how easily his throne might have been exalted above all the kingdoms and empires of the earth.

But, no. It was love, love, love, that was wanted; and therefore he came to exemplify love, and illustrate love, and inculcate

love, and refresh, and revive, and redeem the wicked, and weary, and wasted world with love.

Oh! why have not the people so understood it? And why have they not united in the enthronement of love?

Alas! in their hearts, too—in our hearts, too—self has been enthroned. Whether we have possessed little or much, it has been made to minister—not to God, not to Christ, not to the Church, not to any objects of holy love, but to self—the antichrist of self—equally repulsive in the small as in the great.

We have looked upon the great, in their worldly glory, rather than upon Christ in his spiritual glory. And if we could not equal them, we have, at least, envied them, and tried to be as proud as they, and as vain as they, and as rude as they, and as selfish as they, and as resentful as they, and as suspicious as they, and as full of guile as they; in few words, as foolish, and sinful, and injurious, and wretched as they.

Ah! why have we not looked at Jesus? We might have become like him. He does not proudly assume what we never can reach, and then say: Stand aloof, for you see you can never resemble me. No, no! Though “in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily,” he comes to us “in the form of a servant,” and says to us, gently and kindly: “Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls.” That is, become each one of you a servant, even as I am; be meek and lowly as I am; and so you shall find rest. You may not think so; but believe me, and try it, and so you will find it. “For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.” Try it, and you will find it so. Why, the very shadow of the world’s yoke is heavier than the whole weight of mine. That is the yoke of self, and self is a task-master that cuts to the bone. My yoke is the yoke of love; and love is the angel of God that leads his children in safe and blessed disguise from the bondage of earth to the liberty and rapture of heaven.

Oh! tell me, then, brethren and friends; tell me, one and all, if love has so long been dishonored, is it not high time to repair the wrong? Shall we not recall the exile? Shall we not vindicate her rights? Shall we not restore her rights? Shall we not engage in the coronation of love in the soul?

It must be so. The soul is desolated with rebellion and misrule that does not acknowledge this reign. What, shall appetite, or passion, or pride, or vanity, or ambition, or genius, or learning, or self, in any of its forms, wear the crown of the soul, and love—the equal friend of God and man—be excluded from her rightful dominion? See to it, sinner! See to it, that, by the grace of God, you break this bitter bondage.

And you, O Christian! hear me, a word or two more. Why, even if faith be present, love is greater than faith. Even if

hope be present, love is greater than hope. What then? Shall we content ourselves with faith, and neglect love. Or, shall we listen to the music of hope, and despise the pleadings of love. Never. See! faith welcomes love to the throne. See! hope unites in this happy welcome.

But beware, or self, after all, will prevent the coronation. If love put on the crown, be sure it will not be in vain. If love put on the crown, be sure it will fulfill its obligations to both God and man; to both Christ and the Church. It matters not at what expense; time, or toil, or means; prayers, or pains, or tears; whatever sacrifices are necessary, love will be sure to ordain them. Self knows this, and self will prevent the enthronement of such a sovereign if it can.

But one word more. I have said that faith and hope may enter heaven. But this was in company with love, not without it. Faith and hope may not entirely forsake you here, even though you slight the claims of love; but when you leave the earth, if love be not enthroned in your soul, faith and hope will bid you farewell for ever.

---

## SERMON VI.

---

BY REV. LEMUEL S. POTWIN,

BRIDGEWATER, CT.

---

### THE CONVERSION OF LITTLE CHILDREN.

"SUFFER the little children to come unto me."—MARK 10: 14.

THESE words of Christ imply that some one was hindering little children from coming to him; and this we find to be the case. Those disciples, who should have been foremost in introducing both young and old to their Master, had just been rebuking some who brought young children to him. We do not know why the disciples did so. It has been suggested that they regarded the presence of the children as an interruption of the Saviour's teachings. They could not bear that those who were too young to be taught should take up the Saviour's time. It may be that some of them were too young to be taught, but, if so, it was no worse for them to be there than for some others who were too old to be taught. Very likely some of them were too young to understand much that Christ said, but they were not too young to have him put his hands on them, and pray, (for that is what he did to them;)

not too young to gaze into his glorious face and take one indelible impression from it; not too young to be "blessed," for we read: "He took them up in his arms, and put his hands upon them and blessed them." Those little ones in his arms may have got more good than some profound minds have from hearing a hundred Gospel-sermons and reading the Bible through and through.

The disciples were hindering children from entering the kingdom of heaven; and we read that, "When Jesus saw it he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein."

Christian friends, it is possible that we stand guilty of keeping little children from coming to Jesus. Not that we have ever formed a deliberate purpose to do so, but we may have adopted opinions which prevent our praying and laboring directly for their conversion. Since Jesus left the world in body, the Holy Spirit, in a sense, takes his place. We can not come to Jesus in person, or bring others, but the Holy Spirit brings us in heart to Jesus, by his renewing grace. Now, if we adopt the notion that little children are too young to be regenerated by the Holy Ghost, and if we therefore fail to use the appropriate means for their conversion, we are acting over the part of those rebuked disciples, and Jesus is "much displeased" with us.

My subject is, *The Conversion of Little Children*. What I shall attempt to prove is this: that we ought to strive for and look for the conversion of young children; and by young children I do not mean those ten or twelve years of age. They ought to have been Christians long ago. I mean those from six or eight years old and under. I do not attempt to fix the lower limit.

Now, lay aside those impressions on this subject which are merely the result of habit; do not say: "It is preposterous to think of that little, weak, ignorant, careless, laughing, crying child as a Christian." That is appealing, and indeed deceptively, to the imagination. Let us make our appeal to Christian truth.

I. I argue that little children are not too young to be converted, because they are not too young to do wrong. Parents, and all who have the care of children, will be ready to admit that wrongdoing commences very early in life. St. Augustine, who became a Christian in mature life, felt inclined to make confession for sins committed in his mother's arms. It is not necessary for the argument that we fix upon any definite time as the point where sin commences; nor that we make a sharp distinction between actual and "original or birth sin." It is certain that original sin in its origin was actual, and that actual sin has the early development and universality which stamp it as original. The sin that I now

ascribe to little children, whatever else it may be called, is actual—obviously the only sin that anybody commits, whether young or old. Whatever may be our theory of infant depravity; or infant salvation, we believe that children do wrong when very young. They exhibit the same tendencies of temper and conduct, which in later life bring down upon them the condemnation of society and the penalties of civil law, and expose them to the fearful judgment of God. You may excuse their conduct a thousand times by saying that the “dear little things” don’t know any better, but there comes a time in every family when you are confronted with indisputable evidence that those little souls are sinning. They do not sin on the same scale as you of mature mind, but they do it, as they do every thing, in their way.

The argument, then, is this: When children are old enough to do wrong, they are old enough to do right. If they are not too young to sin, they are not too young to be converted. “But,” you say, “how can I make them do right when they can not understand Christian instruction?” I did not say you could make them do right. Can you always make older persons do right? The question is not, what we can make them do, but what God has endowed them with, and what he can lead them to do. Do you believe that God has endowed a human being with the capacity for doing wrong, which is not also a capacity for doing right? “But the Fall has affected these children.” So has it older persons no less. The idea that children are any more under the influence of the fall than adults, so that children must inevitably sin for a time before they attain the capacity for being converted, is monstrous. Yet the shadow, at least, of such an idea, seems widely to overspread the Christian community. We see how hard it is to give children intellectually clear ideas of religion, and hastily conclude that they must wait till they are able to understand our creeds before they become Christians. But, Christian parent, can you believe that your child is doing wrong every day of its life and yet is absolutely too young to have implanted within it a right principle of action? that it is old enough to incur God’s frown, and not old enough to have his smile? old enough to be lost, and not old enough to be saved?

Perhaps you repel this argument because it implies that children may be lost. You prefer to think that none can be Christians, and that none need be in order to be saved. But you are seeking consolation where you have no right to go, and the consolation itself is inadequate, for how can you set the limit of responsibility, and how know that a child dies before that limit is reached? But you have no right to such consolation. There is nothing in the Bible that warrants our believing that the sins of childhood are pardoned in any different way from those of adult life. Your child must be saved by the blood of Christ and the renewing of



the Holy Ghost, and why should you seek for a different way? God can in this way prepare your dying child for heaven; do you ask anything more? Then, your child may not die in early life. Do not adopt beforehand such a consolation for its possible death as may ruin it if it lives. It is most useful to believe in the *danger* of children, whether they live or die, that we may thus be led to secure their safety. It is stated that Dr. Thomas Scott, on becoming convinced, by a striking case of disobedience, that his very young child was sinning against God, was overcome with emotion, and prayed for its conversion with heart-broken earnestness.

II. I argue that little children are not too young to be converted, because the regeneration, whether of children or adults, is the work of the Holy Spirit. I grant that *you* can not convert a child by instruction, and I add that you can not convert any body by mere instruction. It might also be granted, without effecting the argument, that it is more difficult to apply the means of grace to a child than to an adult, and yet we need not be in haste to make this admission, for is there not as much hope of a child of five years, as of a man of fifty? It does not take so much truth to satisfy a very young mind as an older one. A little plant will grow in a handful of earth, while a sturdy tree will fill a half-acre with its roots. Who can tell just how much knowledge is necessary for the Spirit's saving work? A great deal of our knowledge is attained in chasing away doubts, which immature minds are not troubled with. Our additional knowledge, in this view, simply keeps our moral balance, and enables us to maintain a child-like faith.

But, if you please, let it stand admitted that a child's mind is not so accessible to our intellectual efforts as a mature one; the point is not what we can do, but what the Holy Spirit can do. Do you see any greater difficulty in the Holy Spirit's converting a child, than in the conversion of an adult? What is needed in both cases is a new heart. Can you give a reason why the Spirit should not renew a little child's heart? If regeneration is the work of man, and is effected by our reasoning powers, we may despair of little children. We must wait till their minds grow stronger, though their hearts grow harder. Is it uncharitable to say that distrust and neglect of the Holy Spirit is at the bottom of our distrust of the conversion of children? When we realize that if we are Christians, we are "born of the Spirit," can we doubt for a moment that the youngest can be born of the same Spirit? As early as they can do wrong, can not the Spirit lead them to do right? *You* can not change those hearts; but is there a human soul, however young, to which its Author can not find access?



"But what can we do as the 'means of grace' to them?" Do as you do for older sinners; pray for the Holy Spirit to renew them, and then teach them what you can by precept and example. Have faith in the power of the Spirit. Without his blessing your efforts for any one are vain, and with his blessing the youngest sinner can have a new heart. Then pray; pray before you can teach; pray while you teach, and "pray without ceasing." It "availeth much."

III. I argue that little children are not too young to be converted, because piety is a matter of the heart, rather than of the intellect. The kingdom of heaven is entered, not by solving any problem, but by yielding the heart—the will and the affections—to God. If we look at any large number of persons who give good evidence of piety, we find them differing widely from each other in intellectual capacity, in general knowledge, and in religious knowledge. But they agree in loving the Saviour. Christ's apostles, during his life, had narrow views of the way of salvation, but they were true disciples, all but Judas, who perhaps knew as much as any of them. Converts from heathenism, of adult age, many of them knew less of Bible truth than the very youngest Sunday-school scholar among us; but their hearts are changed.

Now, how is it with young children? They know very early how to love and to hate. Can you tell me why they can not love God as soon as they can love their parents? "But they can not see God." Neither can adult persons see God. They see him by faith—that is, they believe strongly in his existence. Are you sure that little children can not have this faith? They do have it. They can not give you Paley's argument for the existence of God, but they can and do believe in him and love him. Many a little child has kneeled down and prayed to God with a faith that puts us all to shame. What says Christ in immediate connection with the text? "Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein." And how do we often describe our faith? We call it "childlike confidence." Shall we then distrust the capacity for piety of those who stand, by Christ's direction and our consent, as models of faith?

The truth is, that young children have many advantages for being Christians, over older persons, because they are all heart. They are naturally confiding; are free from reserve on the subject of religion; are tender-hearted; not troubled by those doubts that hinder and perplex adults, and are not so strongly under the power of evil habit. True, they do not know much about doctrines, the Atonement, the Divinity of Christ, and many other important things; but how much did the ancient patriarchs know about these things? And how much do we know about them? The imaginings of children respecting God, and heaven, and hell, seems to us

absurd, but hereafter will not our present notions of these subjects seem as childish and inadequate to us, as theirs do now? Then let us not feel above them, but take them with us, nay, follow them into the kingdom of heaven.

IV. Thus far we have reasoned on general grounds. Let us now consider some special examples and teachings, found in God's word.

Notice first the case of the prophet Samuel. He was a child given in answer to prayer, and devoted by his mother to the Lord from infancy. The way in which he is always mentioned in the Bible leaves no doubt that he was pious from earliest childhood. We read, "The child Samuel grew on and was in favor both with the Lord and also with men." Now, if a child, under the old dispensation, when none could tell him of a Jesus who took children in his arms and blessed them, and amid the corrupting influences of a society of which Eli's sons were leaders—if a child in such circumstances could grow up piously, how dare we even for a moment think of limiting God's grace toward children now, under the light of Christian truth, and the influence of a Saviour's example?

Notice the case of John the Baptist, of whom the angel said: "He shall be filled with the Holy Ghost even from his mother's womb." This, indeed, refers to a special work of the Spirit qualifying him for the prophetic office, but without doubt, in his case that work included making him early a child of God. If then the Spirit so early found access to his heart, can he not find early access to hearts in our day?

I refer you next to the childhood of Jesus Christ. We do not know many particulars of it, but we know that he "knew no sin," and that therefore his childhood was a sinless one. He was, then, at this period of life, peculiarly a model for children as afterwards he was a model for all. If it is the work of grace to stamp his image on us, it is equally the work of grace to stamp the image of his childhood upon children. I have no doubt that when he took those little ones in his arms, he thought of his own infancy and childhood, and that the thought gave peculiar tenderness to his caresses, and prayers, and blessing. *He* could see their capability for being pious, whether his disciples could or not, for had not his own young heart throbbed with childhood's love for God? He could see where there was room for germs of piety to grow, and he knew how to cultivate them. "Stand off ye well-meaning but ignorant disciples; suffer the little children to come unto me. I became a child that I might win the children."

In regard to the special teachings on this subject, I need refer to only two occasions in the life of Christ. When children sang his praises in the temple, and the astonished and caviling priests

said: "Hearest thou what these say?" he replied "Have ye never read, Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise?"

The other occasion was that on which our text was spoken, which with its connection is a very clear and beautiful statement of the truth that little children may be Christians. "Suffer the little children to come unto me and forbid them not, for such is the kingdom of God." Whatever this may mean in regard to the salvation of infants too young to receive any instruction, or in regard to the covenant relation with believer's children, its most obvious meaning is that "little children" are old enough to be interested in Christ, and to have a Christian disposition. Jesus refers expressly to their way of receiving the kingdom of God, as a model for others. "Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein." This can not mean that we should receive it as a depraved, corrupt, unconverted little child, but that we must come to Christ with the humble, trustful spirit with which a little child comes to him. We must reverse our lives; cast off the vile additions made to our character; return to the simplicity and humility of childhood, and thus receive Christ. How strongly does this present the truth that even very young children can be the sincere and hearty followers of Jesus. Why should we become like little children, if they have not a peculiar aptitude for piety?

The idea that our Saviour in these words has no reference to real piety in children, but merely refers to them, as he might to the lambs, for rhetorical illustration, hardly deserves a serious refutation. He could not have been very "much displeased" with the disciples, nor could their repentance have been very deep, if they had been guilty only of excluding from the Saviour's presence a happy illustration.

V. It is a pleasing confirmation of our faith in very early piety, to observe the many instances, within our own knowledge and observation, of the conversion of young children, and of their teachable spirit with reference to religion. I do not suppose that every thing which passes for child-piety is genuine, but even those childish prayers which are quoted as mere matter for remark, are often little sprouts of piety which God means to have cultivated and trained; not clipped off and killed by neglect. If you are accustomed to read children's religious papers, you have found many illustrations of the piety of young children. It would be pleasant to quote examples, and very easy to fill a sermon with such, but I will not detain you with these, and partly because many regard them as mere curiosities—instances of religious precociousness. Such a view is, I believe, far from the truth, and springs from the same notion that the Apostles had, that religion is not for child-

ren; but it may be more to the purpose to remind you that the labors of Rev. E. P. Hammond are eminently blessed among children. He approaches them with the utmost faith in their capacity to become Christians, and many young hearts have been given to Jesus as the fruit of his faith and zeal. A little boy, just converted, writes to him: "I love Jesus. I love to read my Bible. I love to go to meeting. I love Christians." Is there anything in those four sentences above the capacity of a child old enough to read?

Some of you, perhaps, will not need to go to books and papers, but have laid up in the most sacred recess of a parent's heart, tearful memories of little ones, now saints in heaven, that came to Jesus and received the "kingdom of God as a little child."

The influence of such examples is awakened in many minds by the fact that some who in very early life give evidence of faith, on growing up appear to lose it entirely, and require regeneration as much as any one. How shall we explain this? In the first place, we must remember that neither children nor adults always hold out in apparent piety. We should not expect more in this respect from the young than the old. In the next place, children have not learned self-inspection, and it requires skill to interpret their characters rightly. We should not condemn their piety because we blunder in examining it. But the chief explanation is to be found, I think, in this, that parents neglect to train the piety of their young children, because they have no faith in its existence. There is an interval between the early years when "Now I lay me down to sleep," is the carefully instilled prayer, and the age of twelve or fourteen, during which Christian parents cease to watch over the private devotions of their children, appearing to think that these helpless lambs must pass through a period when they are too old to be carried in the bosom, and too young to go alone. What wonder that piety so neglected fails to show itself? What wonder that, when in time of revival these children are reawakened, the unfaithful parent can not see evidence of a previous regeneration? Such cases should not destroy our confidence in children's piety, but in parental fidelity.

I have, in so many ways, anticipated the practical application of this subject, that it would be unsuitable to dwell long upon it in closing.

You who are Sunday-school teachers may learn that your pupils, however young, are old enough to be true Christians.

You who are young, but older than "little children" may learn that you have already refrained too long from entering the kingdom of heaven.

But the main lesson is for parents. God has made you the almost exclusive guardians of their very early years. Before your offspring can understand the instruction that comes from this pul-

pit, or even enter the youngest class in the Sunday-school, they may be brought by you to Jesus. Do not decline this peculiar responsibility. You need not delay until you perceive clearly the moral character of the child. Begin as soon as the new life is placed in your hands, for your first work is prayer. Do you believe in a prayer-hearing God? Do you believe in the Holy Ghost? Then pray that the Holy Ghost may take possession of that young heart. Give up your child to God. Banish every selfish thought, and beseech God daily to take and bless and use your child for his glory. Do not pray that this may be done at some remote future time. Pray that the Spirit may guide the earliest unfoldings of intelligence and character.

Then add to prayer such effort as is adapted to impress and guide young souls. Teach your children to pray. Do not say that they are unable to pray aright, but implore the Spirit to make them feel what their young lips utter.

Do not be slow to believe that your prayers are answered and your efforts blessed. Accept thankfully evidence that God gives you of the beginnings of piety, and set yourselves to train that piety into every Christian excellence. Yet do not expect maturity of character. The conversion of children does not convert them into old people. Do not be discouraged if they do wrong. How is it with adult Christians? Do they not do wrong? But they repent. Teach young children to repent. In reliance on the Spirit teach them every Christian duty. Above all, teach them by example. Let them hear you pray. Imitate Christ in this respect. Let them see your good works. Let your looks as well as words impress them. Warm their hearts with your fervent Christian love before they can even lisp the name of Jesus.

Be induced to do all this by your love for their souls. Perhaps you feel sure of their salvation if they die young; but how if they live? Unless they are regenerated when "little children" do you see any security against a life of irreligion and an eternity of woe? Some of you have a covenant with the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, respecting these children. Does that covenant require you to wait for many years for its fulfillment on God's part? Make trial, by your faithfulness, and see.

I address some parents who do not profess to be Christians. Who shall lead your children to Christ if not you? If you are not pious let this be a motive for your becoming so. In order to bless your children you must pray for them; and if you have never prayed before, now is the time to begin. You must also teach them the way of the Lord; and if you have not yet learned the lesson, now is the time to begin. You must set them a pious example, and by your love for them be persuaded to do so. Do you ask, how shall I begin? I point you to the family altar. Have you one? If not, till that is set up you can not hope to lead your



children to Jesus. In view of its influence upon them dare you neglect it? What if, dear friends, in endeavoring to save your children you should yourselves be saved? Go, then, and carry your dear ones to Jesus, and when you see them stretching out their little hands to him, do you also "receive the kingdom of God as a little child."

---

## THE PRAYER-MEETING.

---

### Fulton-Street Prayer-Meeting.

It is encouraging and gratifying to every Christian heart, far and near, to learn that this Bethel of prayer continues well attended—every day, every week, every month. Daily prayer ascends like a column of holy incense to heaven redolent of blessings. Here strangers meet from many parts of the land, and mingle their praises and prayers together in holy fellowship, and then go their way rejoicing. This prayer-meeting and the marked answers to prayer which are made known almost every day are a standing monument to the efficacy of prayer. Christians may well thank God and take courage when they read the history of this prayer-meeting in its weekly annals.

**PERSONAL CONVERSION.** — The cases are numerous in which requests come from those who ask prayers for their own conversion. Often the writers say they have been seeking an interest in Christ for a long time, and have not been able to obtain it. They can not find their way to Christ. They feel that the burden of sin is heavy upon them, but they know not

how it may be removed. They ask for prayers to this end.

What if impenitent persons in congregations in all parts of the land were to send to the minister in his pulpit or to the weekly prayer-meeting a written request for prayers for the conversion of his own soul. How stirring and quickening would be its influence on the hearts of Christians.

### HOSPITAL PRAYER-MEETING.—

In one of the daily prayer-meetings one of the speakers said he had visited a hospital for which we had often been asked to pray. He wished all this meeting could have been there. It was an affecting sight to see these men come hobbling down on their crutches and sticks in great numbers to attend the place of prayer. A more solemn prayer-meeting is not often attended. Great numbers were deeply moved during the meeting, and many tears were seen falling. Then when tattoo beat, which was a signal to close the service, you ought to have seen how anxious the men were that it should be extended. Some of the anxious men, after the meeting was dismissed, came round the minister



for religious instruction. One noble-looking Vermont soldier came up and confessed his anxiety to become a Christian, but he could not find his way to Jesus. It was all a mystery to his mind. The tears were coursing down his cheeks while he spoke of his perplexities.

The same speaker said he held a Testament in his hand. It was from the battle-field of Fredericksburgh. On one of the fly-leaves was this record: "Found on the battle-field of Fredericksburgh, December 16th, at two A.M., while covering the evacuation of that place, by P. H. B. Taken from beside a dead body." There was evidence that this Testament had been read after the owner had been wounded. It was found lying open. On the fly leaf in front is this inscription:

*A Present to William Glover  
From his Sister Maggy.  
Read this often.*

It was a beautiful gilt-edged Testament having a clasp on the lids, bearing the imprint of the American Bible Society of the year 1860.

THE LATE DR. CUTLER.—This eminent minister of Christ was leading this prayer-meeting one day, and a young man was seen sitting immediately in front of him in great distress of mind; so great that concealment was impossible. When the prayer-meeting was over he approached Dr. Cutler and said: "I have been an infidel all my days. Now I am persuaded the Bible must be true. Can you point me to any part of the Bible that reveals a salvation possible for such a sinner as I am?" Dr. Cutler immediately turned to some pas-

sages in John and invited him to read them. He read them aloud. "Is there any salvation there for such a sinner as you?" said the Doctor. "Oh! surely, surely, there is," said the young man; "I did not know that any such passages were in the Bible." This young man then and there seemed to turn his believing regard to the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world. He proved afterward to have then laid hold on the hope set before him in this Gospel. He changed the whole turn of his life from that day. Before he had been a writer of some ability in favor of infidelity, and contributed largely to the infidel periodicals of the day. Now he devotes himself to the upholding of the faith he once labored to destroy.

ANSWERS TO PRAYER.—A lady wrote to the prayer-meeting saying that she wished to return grateful acknowledgments to God for answers to prayer. Some time ago she sent requests for prayer for the conversion of her three children and for the divine keeping of her husband, a professor of religion, who was away in California. Since that time two daughters have been converted. And now she begs prayer to be continued for the conversion of her son.

Three several letters were read on the same day, giving intelligence of answers to prayer.

A young man said: "I think I ought to come with my thank-offering before God for his mercy in answer to prayer." He joined the Church when very young, as he now supposes, without any experimental knowledge of religion. When in college he became a complete apostate. His conversion he attributes to God in answer to the

prayer of a cousin, now dead, who had uncommon fervor in prayer.

**QUICKENED SENSE OF SIN.**—The numerous strangers which in the spring crowd this prayer-meeting adds interest and solemnity to the scene. The week of prayer still sheds abroad its benign influence. This is seen in the requests for prayer which indicate a highly quickened sense of sin and danger on the part of many who ask prayers for the conversion of others, and on the part of many who ask prayer for themselves. It is by no means uncommon for persons to state their anxieties for themselves dating with the week of prayer.

**A YOUNG MAN ASKING PRAYER FOR HIMSELF.**—He stood in the back part of the room. He had been standing through the meeting. Toward the close he said that he felt it was his duty to ask for prayer. He had for some time felt his need of the salvation which is in Jesus Christ. He hoped the meeting would pray that he might be led into the exercise of faith in Jesus Christ.

A strange clergyman, as he appeared to be, arose on the instant and offered a singularly affecting and appropriate prayer. Many hearts responded to the earnest petition that this young man might at once embrace Christ as he is freely offered in the Gospel, and that he might go away saved from condemnation and sin through faith in Jesus Christ.

**HOSPITAL CONVERSIONS.**—By the wonderful mercy of God, many soldiers of the army will be converted and saved, who, had they remained at home, had died in impenitence. The chaplain of the

hospital at York, Pa., says: "We have had here nearly three thousand patients since opening, about the first of July, 1862. We have been cheered by seeing quite a number turning to the Lord. Each month of this year I have baptized some, and added them to the general Evangelical Christian Church. Among them have been several young men of much promise, from New-York State. My humble experience, both in the regiment and in the hospital, has been that the *chaplaincy is not a failure*, as has been so oracularly announced. We have had many discouragements, and sometimes felt almost as if it was a failure; but this was often so before in a pastorate of fifteen years. I believe I have never admitted, within the same time, so many men to church privileges on their profession, as I have done within the last three months. To God's name be all the glory. We are quietly working on, and desire an interest in the prayers of God's people."

#### Clock of Conscience.

HAVE you ever heard of the great clock of St. Paul's in London? At mid-day, in the roar of business, when carriages, and carts, and wagons, and omnibuses go rolling through the streets, how many never hear that great clock strike unless they live very near it. But when the work of the day is over, and the roar of business has passed away—when men are gone to sleep, and silence reigns in London—then at twelve, at one, at two, at three, at four, the sound of that clock may be heard for miles around—Twelve!—One!—Two!—Three!—Four! How that clock is heard by many a sleepless man. That clock is just like the con-

science of the impenitent man. While he has health and strength, and goes on in the whirl of business, he will not hear his conscience. He drowns and silences its voice by plunging into the world. He will not allow the inner man to speak to him. But the day will come when conscience will be heard, whether he likes it or not. The day will come when its voice will sound in his ears and pierce like a sword. The time must come when he must retire from the world, and lie down on the sick-bed, and look death in the face. And then the clock of conscience, that solemn clock, will sound in his heart, and if he has not repented will bring wretchedness and misery to his soul. Oh no! write it down in the tablets of your hearts—without repentance, no peace!

#### The Greatest Street-Precacher.

ASCHBISHOP LEIGHTON, returning home one morning, was asked by his sister: "Have you been hearing a sermon?" "I've met a sermon," was the answer. The sermon he had met was a corpse on its way to the grave; the preacher was Death. Greatest of street-preachers! Nor laws nor penalties can silence him. No tramp of horses, nor rattling of carriages, nor rush and din of crowded streets can drown his voice. In heathen, Papal, and Protestant countries, in monarchies, and free states, in town and country, the solemn pomp of his discourses is going on. In some countries a man is imprisoned for even dropping a tract. But what prison will hold this awful preacher? What chains will bind him? He lifts up his voice in the very presence of tyrants, and laughs at

their threats. He walks unobstructed through the midst of their guards, and delivers the messages which trouble their security and embitter their pleasures. If we do not meet his sermons still we can not escape them. He comes to our abodes, and taking the dearest objects of our love as his text, what terrible sermons does he deliver to us! Oh! what weeping audiences sometimes has this silent preacher! Yet there is a secret doctrine, an occult meaning running through his discourses, which is often not apprehended. Few "lay it to heart." His oft-repeated sermons still enforce the same doctrine, still press upon us the same exhortation. "Surely, every man walketh in a vain show. Surely, they are disquieted in vain. Here there is no continuing city. Why are you laboring for that which I will presently take from you and give to another? Take no thought for the morrow. Prepare to meet thy God."

#### God's Love.

"For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."—JOHN 3: 16.

MR. NOTT, missionary in the South Sea Islands, was on one occasion reading a portion of the Gospel of John to a number of the natives. When he had finished the sixteenth verse of the third chapter, a native who had listened with avidity and joy to the words, interrupted him and said: "What words were those you read? What sounds were those I heard? Let me hear those words again." Mr. Nott again read the verse, "God so loved," etc., when the native rose from his seat and said: "Is that true? Can that be true?"

God love the world when the world not love him? God so love the world, as to give his son to die, that man might not die? Can that be true?" Mr. Nott again read the verse, "God so loved the world," etc., told him it was true, and that it was the message God had sent to them, and that whosoever believed in him would not perish, but be happy after death. The overwhelming feelings of the wondering native were too powerful for expression or restraint. He burst into tears, and as these chased each other down his countenance he retired to meditate in private on the amazing love of God, which had that day touched his soul; and there is every reason to believe he was afterward raised to share the peace and happiness resulting from the love of God shed abroad in his heart.

#### Whitefield's Experience.

"My mind being now more enlarged, I began to read the Holy Scriptures upon my knees, laying aside all other books, and praying over, if possible, every line and word. This proved meat indeed, and drink indeed, to my soul. I daily received fresh life, light, and power from above. I got more true knowledge from reading the Book of God in one month than I could ever have acquired from all the writings of men. In one word, I found it profitable for reproof, for correction, for instruction; every way sufficient to make the man of God perfect, thoroughly furnished for every good work and word. About this time God was pleased to enlighten my soul, and bring me into the knowledge of his free grace, and the necessity of being justified in his sight by faith only. Bur-

kitt's and Henry's *Expositions* were of admirable use to lead me into this and all other Gospel truths."

To these habits of reading Whitefield added much secret prayer. "Oh! what sweet communion had I daily vouchsafed with God in prayer! How often have I been carried out beyond myself when meditating in the fields! How assuredly I felt that Christ dwelt in me and I in him, and how, daily, did I walk in the comforts of the Holy Ghost, and was edified and refreshed in the multitude of peace!"

#### Rest, Weary Soul.

Rest, weary soul!

The penalty is borne, the ransom paid,  
For all thy sins full satisfaction made;  
Strive not thyself to do what Christ has done;

Take the free gift, and make the joy thine own.

No more by pangs of guilt and fear distressed—

Rest, sweetly rest.

Rest, weary heart!

From all thy silent griefs, and secret pain,  
Thy profitless regrets and longings vain;  
Wisdom and love have ordered all the past,  
All shall be blessedness and light at last;  
Cast off the cares that have so long oppressed—

Rest, sweetly rest.

Rest, weary head!

Lie down to slumber in the peaceful tomb,  
Light from above has broken through its gloom,

Here, in the place where once thy Saviour lay,

Where he shall wake thee on a future day,  
Like a tired child upon its mother's breast—

Rest, sweetly rest!

Rest, spirit free!

In the green pasture of the heavenly shore,  
Where sin and sorrow can approach no more;

With all the flock by the good Shepherd fed,

Beside the streams of life eternal led,  
Forever with thy God and Saviour blest—

Rest, sweetly rest!